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THE  
MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER.

THOS. SHREWIN,  
S. W. BATES,  
CHAS. NORTHEED,  
J. D. PHILBRICK,

} Publishing Committee.

} S. W. BATES,  
Editor of this Number.

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NO. 1.

WHAT ! another paper upon Education ! That subject upon which every one has talked, and almost every one has written ! The first theme of the tyro, the last of the seer ! Upon which all persons have their 'own original thoughts,' about, when universally received, to produce wonderful reforms, and of which, therefore, they cannot suffer the world to be ignorant ! Can any new truth be found, or even, can any old one be presented in a new dress ? Have not the philosophers and wise men of the past, the theoretical and practical men of the present, said all that can be said, and repeated their sayings too, in every form of expression ? And have not all access to their records ? Why then another paper ?

But, kind reader, your questions suggest their own answer ; yes, are arguments against themselves. The very fact that all classes of persons, in all ages of the world, have been interested in the condition and advancement of Education, proves that it is worthy of *our* constant consideration. Its triteness, indeed, is the strongest possible argument of its worth. Men do not long concern themselves with things of little value. It is the diamond alone men labor to polish. False things are of earth, and perish with the age that produces them. Truth alone is imperishable, immortal. Permanency and unchangeableness are the evidence of its presence. As the pure is made more conspicuous by the impurity which surrounds it, so every great subject, from the truth which it contains, towers above all selfish interests, stands age after age, and by its very standing proclaims the truth which gives it strength.

That Education always *has been* talked about, is the logical proof that it always *will be*. Its intrinsic importance is the physical cause. It must be an engrossing topic. For if the

education of the people is faulty, they, and every thing connected with them, suffer. National character, national prosperity, national happiness, all hang upon national education. A people is therefore good or bad, powerful or weak, fortunate or miserable, according to the principles inculcated, and the methods employed, in the education of the masses. Why then should not teachers, they who from their position ought, at least, to be the most conversant of all persons with the subject, advance their opinions through that organ which the age declares to be the popular means of communication?

That writings concerning education are often controversial but proves its personal application. Unimportant statements gain general credence. They affect no one's interests, and are hence received without protest. But truths of universal application, however substantiated, will always be subjects of debate. For example, every one believes the historical record of Cæsar's life and character; for belief or disbelief is personally of little importance; but the life and character of our Saviour are still a matter of controversy, for they are intimately connected with the present and future prospects of every immortal being. For the same reasons, the difference of opinion, the controversies, and even the disputes, which have always attended the progress of Education, are arguments which should be adduced to prove, rather than to disprove, its importance.

But you give us nothing new! What then! Said Solomon, long since, "there is *nothing* new under the sun." The world contains but few original truths upon any subject. Collect the books of the world, cull out the ideas they contain; add the thoughts of all living; then cast away the duplicates, and how comparatively small is the remainder. It would not require a large library to contain it. Moreover, there is falsehood as well as truth in originality. Had we the divine power of distinguishing good from evil, and should cull out still farther all that is false, the final remainder would be as small in bulk as it would be great in value, — its size would be in inverse ratio to its worth.

He who discovers to the world a truth, is as immortal as the truth itself. And notwithstanding the license of these advertising times, we cannot on these terms predicate immortality to our periodical, even to satisfy those who, like the Athenians, "spend their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing."

The men whose names have come down to us in remembrance, we estimate according to their originality. Even in this practical age we have a reverence for a Newton which we cannot entertain towards a Fulton. The one discovered, the

other invented. That is, the one gave to the world original truths; the other arranged modifications of truth for practical advantage. Truths then are few; but the deductions, the modifications, and the combinations of truth are infinite. They are subject to the rules of Arithmetical Permutation. They are like the musical scale, which with its few but infinitely varied notes furnishes inexhaustible melody. Different ages, different nations, and, indeed, all conceivable human differences, combine to increase the modifications of truth, moral, mental, and physical.

In the animal and vegetable kingdoms, God has made but few great classes, or orders; but their subdivisions, into genera, species, and individuals, are vastly varied. The applications of truth are analogous.

Again, of the species man no two individuals can be found exactly alike in either of his three natures; and in the details of life each requires a distinct inducement, and a personal application of truth, modified according to his condition and relation.

Though, then, our journal may not furnish new truths, we hope, among the shiftings of this changeable world, to find food sufficient for the seekers of novelty.

There is nothing, however, inappropriate in reproducing old truths. We want them ever before us, as lights in our dark pilgrimage. And is it fanciful to suppose that the mind necessarily requires the same truth to be often presented to it, just as the body desires, day by day, the same kind of food? Though we say truths are few, yet the world has enough, if it will but *act* upon them. We know better than we do. Our object, then, is not so much to find new truths, as to persuade men to practise upon those they already know. In Education, as in religion, a great part of the educator's business consists in *exhortation*, or, as says Archbishop Whately, "the endeavoring to induce men to use those exertions which they themselves know to be necessary for the attainment of the desired object."

There are some subjects so intrinsically important, that they require to be considered at all times, in all ways, and by all persons. Religion, Government, and Education are examples. Hence we find that, in all ages of the world, these topics have engaged the attention of the enlightened portion of the community. In fact, all history is made up of the progress, or at least, condition, of these three great subjects. It is highly important for all interested in the advancement of Education, to notice also that the method of procedure with reference to all three, at any given time, or in any given nation, has been strikingly similar. Indeed, we might naturally infer similarity of treatment, from the vastness of the subjects considered, their relative and intrinsic importance, and also from the universality of their applica-

tion, and their varied bearings upon each other. They have gone, hand in hand, through adversity and prosperity. They sunk together into the darkness of the middle ages. The reformation of one was the presage to the reformation of all. When despots ruled, they also decided for their subjects the character and amount of their religion and education. When, in the age of Elisabeth, individual mind, in contradistinction from royal prerogative, began to influence the masses,—before the times of division of labor, and consequently before topics of general interest had been appropriated for the distinct consideration of professional classes,—the great minds of England interested themselves almost *equally* in the progress of each. The Bacons and the Hookers wrote nearly as much upon one as another, and have left us a rich legacy upon all.

And now, in this age of equality, the people, those whom these things individually concern, are fast taking the reins in their own hands, and are driving on, by motive powers entirely their own,—*Association* and the *Press*. In employing these powers, Education has been behind the other two. Associations for religious and political purposes have for years been held. In Education, associations are of more recent date. It has advanced rather through individual, than combined effort.

Religious and political periodicals are abundant; educational papers, comparatively few. The sects in religion, and the parties in politics, will in part account for this. For men will do much, when rivalry and contest excites to effort. There are no sects or parties in Education; because, while the other two concern adults, the latter particularly concerns only children, who can neither form associations nor publish papers. In view of the whole matter, teachers, if we wish the education of the people to be cared for, as are their religion and government,—if we wish the teacher in Education to rank beside the teacher in Religion and in Government, we must use the same means that they employ.

The Massachusetts Teachers Association has been formed. We now offer the first number of its semi-monthly periodical, and we ask of all interested in the advancement of Education to give their support to both.

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On parent's knees, a naked, new-born child,  
Weeping thou sat'st, while all around thee smiled;  
So live, that, sinking in thy last, long sleep,  
Thou then may'st smile, while all around thee weep.

From the Arabic, by Sir W. Jones.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING.

The terms placed at the head of this communication are reciprocal, but not convertible. They both denote the same relation; but each implies a distinct, related object, and indicates the peculiar action of this object or person in its appropriate relation. *To teach* is one thing; *to learn* is another; and, though related to the former act, is entirely distinct from it, and performed by a different agent. It is true, the verb, *to learn*, is often vulgarly used interchangeably with the correlative term, *to teach*; and this usage has sometimes been carelessly sanctioned by high literary authority. But it is time that this anomaly should be excluded as well from our colloquial as from our written language. *To teach*, is to communicate knowledge — to give instruction; *to learn*, is to acquire knowledge — to be instructed. The teacher gives; the learner receives. The teacher imparts; the learner acquires. The teacher (truly, without diminishing his acquired stock, which actually increases, in his own mind, while it is thus diffused into the minds of others) communicates what he has previously learned; and the learner makes what is thus communicated to him his own. The teacher, therefore, in the appropriate functions of his office, performs an act, depending on his own will, over which no other mind has control; while the learner, by the exercise of mental powers equally his own, makes an acquisition, corresponding with the strength of those powers, and the energy with which they are exercised.

Nor is this analysis of the relation between teacher and learner, or this proposed definite and precise use of the term *learn*, embarrassed by the fact, that men are sometimes said to be self-taught. For, in cases in which this epithet is used with propriety, the learners make to themselves teachers. The very instruments and means by which they acquire knowledge, are their teachers. They hear the voice of Nature; they listen to the instructions of Revelation. They learn by observation and experience. The word and the works of God are their teachers; and, as truly as in any case, they sustain the subjective relation of pupils, recipients, — inquisitive, active recipients; putting forth their powers to reach the coming knowledge, and to mould and fashion it to their own capacities and habits of association; and thus making it their own, and preparing it for future use.

These critical remarks, however, are here introduced, not so much for the sake of grammatical accuracy, as for the purpose of establishing a general principle for the guidance of practical teachers, and the benefit and highest improvement of their

pupils. For, so far as the term, *to learn*, is used to denote the act of him who communicates knowledge, it implies a state of passivity in him to whom the communication is made; and thus, as the necessity of active exertion, on his part, seems to be superseded, all voluntary effort is discouraged, and he becomes indolent and inactive, of course. Indeed, the consequences of such an impression, as it is naturally made by the careless use of this term (though that impression be but a floating opinion), must be everywhere, and on all minds, pernicious and unfavorable, if not fatal, to high attainments in literature and science. Such an impression on the public mind, must lead to the adoption of injudicious expedients to promote the cause of general education, — expedients which may be of temporary, apparent utility, but such as must ultimately depress the standard of learning, enervate the mental powers of the rising generation, make smatterers and sciolists, and produce a race of superficial thinkers, instead of ripe scholars of vigorous intellects and high attainments. Such an impression, or rather sentiment, however indistinct, must produce, in the mind of the pupil, indolence and stupid inaction, — in that of the teacher, discouragement and a spirit of formality, — in that of the parent, and even the friend and patron of learning, a disposition to complain and find fault with the most laborious and faithful teachers.

Let it never be forgotten, then, that the act of learning belongs to the pupil, and not to the teacher. Indeed, activity of mind is as requisite in the one as it is in the other, in order to secure the happy results of education, and especially of intellectual education. The pupil, as we said, must learn for himself. This is his own appropriate work, — a work which must be performed by himself; it cannot be done for him, by another. In order to acquire knowledge, he must put forth personal effort. He must seek, if he would find; he must strive, if he would ascend the hill and enter the temple of science. In other words, his mind must be in a recipient state, — wakeful, active, — putting forth its powers and pushing forward its susceptibilities, before he can participate in the benefits of the best instruction. Without this preparation in the pupil, and consequent reciprocal action with the teacher, all the labors of the latter will be lost. The knowledge imparted by the teacher will find no reception, certainly no permanent lodgment, in the sluggish mind of the pupil. Instruction, to constitute education, must be received as well as given; and so received as to exercise and discipline the faculties of the mind which it enters; so received as to be permanently held; so received and held as to become incorporated with the mental powers themselves, and ready for appropriate use. It must, indeed, become the

absolute property of the mind receiving it; and be retained by that mind, not as a thing of arbitrary association and memory merely, but it must so interpenetrate this recipient mind, diffuse itself through it, and become assimilated to it, as substantially to constitute a part of the mind itself.

This doctrine of mental activity in the learner, as here stated, if true, is obviously a highly important and practical doctrine; important to teacher and pupil, to parents, and the friends and patrons of education. Many practical lessons may be found in it, and many valuable inferences drawn from it, adapted to the circumstances of the age and the condition of our schools. The space allotted to this article, however, will not allow a full statement and particular illustration of them in this connection. It will, therefore, be closed with a few hints, thrown out without much order, and designed principally for the consideration of professional teachers.

1. The teacher should devise means, and adopt expedients, to excite the curiosity and rouse the energies of his pupils.

2. He should then endeavor to fix their attention, and concentrate their awakened energies, on the prescribed subject of inquiry and instruction.

3. He should connect with his instructions, as far as possible, what is interesting and attractive; so that the associations, formed in the minds of his pupils, will leave them in love with the subject of investigation, and, in proper time, bring them back to the pursuit with readiness and alacrity.

4. He should carefully prescribe for each scholar in his school a proper number of branches, to be pursued in a given time; so as not to distract attention by variety, nor weary and exhaust it by dull uniformity.

5. He should exclude from his illustrations, as far as practicable, every thing calculated to divert the minds of his pupils from the principal subject of investigation.

6. He should be careful, that awakened curiosity be not gratified too soon, by unnecessary and superabundant aid, leaving no motive and no opportunity for effort, on the part of his pupils; nor, on the other hand, be suffered to evaporate, and end in despair, for the want of timely and necessary aid, to enable them to overcome appalling difficulties. With this view, he should intermingle with text-book instruction a due proportion of familiar lecturing; enough of the one with the other to guard against the pernicious effects of excess in either.

7. He should prepare, select, or adapt his text-books, with a due regard to the capacities of his pupils, and with reference to the development and exercise of their various powers of mind, as well as to the immediate acquisition of knowledge. If

text-books are too plain and simple, they will either enervate or disgust; if too concise, abstruse, and deficient in illustration, they will vex and discourage; and in both cases produce mental inaction. The pupil must be made to work; but he must work voluntarily, cheerfully, with hope. Aided too much, his energies remain dormant; too little, they are soon exhausted, and he sinks into a state of despair; and thus both excess and deficiency produce the same pernicious result.

8. The teacher, in all his plans of government and instruction, should keep in view the principal business assigned him. This, according to the doctrine of this communication, and as far as intellectual education is involved, is to rouse the curiosity of his pupils, and keep it awake; to furnish, in a sufficient quantity, wholesome food for their minds, and suitable materials for the active, vigorous employment of all their mental powers.

Other hints might be given, and these more amply illustrated. But enough for the present.

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"The modern schoolmaster is expected to know a little of every thing, because his pupil is required not to be entirely ignorant of any thing. He must be superficially, if I may so say, omniscient. He is to know something of pneumatics; of chymistry; of whatever is curious, or proper to excite the attention of the youthful mind; an insight into mechanics is desirable, with a touch of statistics; the quality of soils, &c., botany, the constitution of his country, *cum multis aliis*.

"All these things—these, or the desire of them—he is expected to instil, not by set lessons from professors, which he may charge in the bill, but at school intervals, as he walks the streets, or saunters through green fields (those natural instructors) with his pupils. The least part of what is expected from him, is to be done in school hours. He must insinuate knowledge at the *mollia tempora fandi*. He must seize every occasion—the season of the year; the time of the day; a passing cloud; a rainbow; a wagon of hay; a regiment of soldiers going by—to inculcate something useful. He can receive no pleasure from a casual glimpse of nature, but must catch at it as an object of instruction. He must interpret beauty into the picturesque. He cannot relish a beggar man or a gypsy, for thinking of the suitable improvement. Nothing comes to him not spoiled by the sophisticating medium of moral uses. The universe—that great book, as it has been called—is to him indeed, to all intents and purposes, a book, out of which he is doomed to read tedious homilies to distasting schoolboys."—*Charles Lamb*.



## OF STUDIES.

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and dispositions of business; for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature; and are perfected by experience; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men condemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed; and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would only be in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man: and, therefore, if a man write a little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit: and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know what he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics subtle; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend; "Abeunt studia in mores." Nay, there is no stond or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies: like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises; bowling is good for the stone and reins, shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for the head, and the like; so, if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again; if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen, for they are "Cymini sectores;" if he be not apt to beat over

matters, and to call upon one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases, so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt. — *Lord Bacon*.

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### MENTAL INERTIA.

The laws and properties of matter and of mind are in some respects analogous. The Author of the universe, who has so wonderfully balanced the causes of action and repose in the material world, has mingled them with equal skill in the mental. In the mental world, there is a law analogous to that tendency in matter which philosophers term *inertia*. There is an intellectual as well as a material inertia. In mind, there is a tendency to resist a change of state, a tendency to adhere to long-cherished opinions, and to confirmed habits of thought.

When once excited with ardent emotions, or roused to intense activity, the mind cannot immediately be brought into a state of repose. And when it has once settled down into a calm of belief, influences of more than ordinary potency must be brought to bear upon it to rouse it from its lethargy. When the mind has fully imbibed any set of opinions, whether true or false, it is not easily persuaded to renounce its belief. It will cling to its established opinions and settled habits of thought with unyielding tenacity. Or, if it has once deliberately decided upon a plan of action, it is disposed to continue in it, and will strenuously repel all attempts to induce it to enter upon a new course.

This inertia is a universal law of the mind. It exerts an influence over all the opinions of men, and all the departments of life. It is a principle of the mind ever operative in the formation of character, and in the establishment of the habits of individuals and the customs of nations.

This principle has an important bearing on Education, affecting both pupils and teachers. It sometimes causes a reluctance on the part of pupils to the formation of correct habits of application. Many children in the early stages of their education acquire habits of listlessness and inattention. The power of abstraction, and of close, continuous study, they have never acquired. The art of rousing the mind to earnest thought, they have never learned. When, therefore, the faithful teacher strives to stimulate them to energetic mental action, and to cultivate in them the habit of wakeful and earnest application, he finds it difficult to rouse them from their listlessness, and to break up their habits of reluctant and careless study. The

inertia of the mind resists any attempts to produce an alteration, and creates a repugnance to any change of state.

This principle also produces in pupils a reluctance to correct that which is wrong in their moral character. This law of inertia repels any attempts to produce an alteration in the mental habits and tastes. When, therefore, a youth has once adopted erroneous opinions, or formed vicious habits, the inertia of the mind lends all its power to strengthen and confirm them. By repelling all attempts from without to work a change in the character, it exerts its powerful efficacy to fortify the mind against any reformation in its opinions or moral tastes. This renders the task of the faithful teacher arduous indeed, when he strives to induce his pupils to abandon a bad habit, or correct a fault in their character. So firmly will this law sometimes establish in the mind of a youth an erroneous opinion, that the counsels, entreaties, and corrections of his teacher seem to have no more power to extirpate it, than has the evening zephyr to uproot the sturdy oak of the mountains.

This principle also operates unfavorably by sometimes creating in teachers an undue attachment to old and stereotyped methods of imparting instruction. Every teacher is liable to slide into a set and formal way of conducting the exercises of his school, and prone to adopt certain fixed methods and set plans in reference to instruction and government. As the teacher engages, month after month, and year after year, in treading the same round of instruction, and in attending to recitations on subjects as familiar to him as the alphabet, he is liable to sink gradually, and almost imperceptibly, into a stiff and mechanical uniformity. Often, before he is aware of it, enthusiasm, freshness of feeling, the love for imparting knowledge, and the noble desire to guide his pupils in the way of mental improvement, gradually give place to mannerism, to mechanical formality, to a dull uniformity, and to a consolidated, stereotyped method of instruction. The inertia of the mind opposes any change in his plans of teaching. It leads him to cling with unyielding pertinacity to his set forms and old methods. It creates in him a repugnance to any alteration in his habits of teaching or his views of education.

Now, the teacher who would faithfully meet the responsibilities of his station, who would impart freshness and new interest to his instructions, must resist this tendency. While avoiding sudden innovations and fitful changes, he should guard against settling down into a rigid uniformity, and a dull, technical mannerism. If he would inspire his pupils with enthusiasm in study, or impart freshness and interest to his instructions, or give to his school a pleasing air of intellectual life and vigor, he must set himself, with a determined earnestness, against that tendency

in the inertia of the mind to create in him a dislike for a healthful progress in his views of Education and plans of teaching, and to cultivate in him an undue attachment to formal and mechanical methods of imparting instruction to his pupils.

But the influence of this law of inertia is not wholly evil. It is a principle of high value in resisting the tendency to hasty and frequent innovations on established systems of Education. While this intellectual inertia sometimes has the effect to attach men, with a pertinacious affection, to old opinions and to superannuated systems, so as to retard the progress of improvements in Education, yet, in its general influence it is valuable, as it presents a formidable obstacle to ambitious experimenters and rash innovators, who would substitute new principles and untried inventions for old educational usages and opinions, whose efficacy and truthfulness have been fully tested by years of successful experiment. A large class of the community at the present time, manifest an excitable love of novelty and innovation. And were it not for the strong conservative influence of this mental inertia, the American mind would run mad with a morbid love of fitful changes in opinions and customs. This principle is peculiarly valuable in operating as a check upon theorists and experimenters in Education. It opposes the abandonment of settled principles and well-tested plans of instruction, for new inventions and untried theories. With a powerful conservative influence it attaches men to old usages and opinions in the art of instruction, which long experience has proved to be right and valuable. Thus it holds the public mind in that true balance between a blind love of ancient usages and a restless desire of novelty, which is favorable to true improvement in the art of teaching, and to a gradual and healthful advancement of the cause of Education.

This mental inertia is also valuable as an encouragement to teachers to impart intellectual and moral instruction to their pupils. It gives stamina to the mind. It serves as a foundation for that noble element of character, decision; that quality of mind which has guided men with a bold energy of action to whatever is brilliant and praiseworthy in human achievements. It gives the teacher reason to hope that any good impressions he may be able to make upon the mind of his pupils will abide. It may encourage him to believe that any valuable truths or sound principles of moral conduct, which he may be able to instil into his pupil's mind, will serve as the substratum and foundation of character. Principles once firmly implanted in the mind are not easily uprooted. The law of inertia will hold them fast. It will help to retain good impressions and to intrench in the heart virtuous principles. So strongly will it sometimes estab-



lish truth in the heart of an ingenuous youth, and so firmly implant right principles upon the deepest foundations of his moral being, that all the assailments of error and the storms of temptation can no more shake the strong citadel of virtue in his heart, than can the waves of old ocean dash Gibraltar's rock from its firm base. Thus the teacher may expect good results from this inertia of the mind. If he is faithful in his endeavors to enlist his pupil on the side of virtue, and in teaching him the great principles of moral rectitude and Christian morality, he may expect that this mental inertia will be as the grasp of the hand of God upon his pupil, which will never let him go astray, but guide him safely through the moral dangers of this world to a nobler life above.

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#### MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION.

This Association held its third annual meeting at Springfield. A brief sketch of the proceedings of the meeting may perhaps interest the readers of this Journal.

The deliberations of the Convention occupied four sessions.

The first session commenced on Monday evening, Nov. 22d, at Hampden Hall. Oliver Carlton, Esq., of Salem, called the meeting to order. Mr. Dame, of Newburyport, was appointed Secretary, *pro tem*. Rev. S. G. Buckingham, of Springfield, offered prayer.

Mr. Ariel Parish, of Springfield, addressed the Association, cordially welcoming the teachers who composed it, and expressing the hope that the result of the meeting would be beneficial, not only to those assembled, but to the cause of Education throughout the State. The President, Mr. Carlton, happily responded to these remarks, and was followed in a similar strain by G. F. Thayer, Esq. of Boston. A Committee, of which Mr. Thayer was Chairman, was appointed, to report a list of officers for the ensuing year.

The Association then listened to a lecture from Mr. Samuel W. Bates, of the Adams School, Boston. The subject of the lecture was, "The Relation of Education to its Age." After the lecture, discussion and remarks followed. Messrs. Thayer and Tower, of Boston; Mr. Wells, of Andover; and Mr. Northend, of Salem, and the lecturer himself, sustained the discussion until the close of the session.

Tuesday morning, the President being absent, Mr. Sherwin, of Boston, took the chair. By a vote of the Association, all teachers present, desirous of enrolling their names as members, were requested to do so. Several names were added. Mr. J.

D. Philbrick, of the Quincy School, Boston, made some spirited remarks upon the estimation in which Teachers should be held by the community.

Mr. Charles Hammond, of Munson Academy, at the appointed hour, delivered a lecture upon "The Relation of the Common School System of New England to our higher Seminaries of Learning." After the lecture, a discussion ensued upon the importance of classical studies. The remarks made were valuable and interesting; and to a mere spectator it must have been plainly apparent that there are two sides to this question. Mr. Libbey, of Portland, Me., indorsed the sentiment of the lecture, and would, if possible, introduce the study of Latin and Greek into our common schools. The opposite opinion was advanced and ably maintained by Messrs. Sherwin, of Boston; Wells, of Andover; Page, of the Normal School at Albany, and Sweetser, of Charlestown.

At the close of this discussion, Mr. Thayer, of Boston, brought forward an amendment to the Constitution, offered by himself at the previous annual meeting. The amendment proposed to make the Vice-Presidents of the Association a part of the Board of Directors. Messrs. Northend, of Salem; Bates and Philbrick, of Boston, and Sweetser, of Charlestown, opposed the amendment, and it was lost.

Mr. Thayer reported a list of officers for the ensuing year. Several of the officers had positively declined a reelection, among whom were the president and recording secretary.

The afternoon session opened with a lecture by Mr. Thomas Sherwin, of the English High School, Boston. The subject of this lecture was, "The Influence of Example, especially with Reference to Education." Messrs. Sweetser, of Charlestown; Libbey, of Portland; Bowers, of Springfield, and Vail, of Newburyport, followed the lecturer with remarks suggested by its important topics.

At the opening of the evening session, Mr. Nelson Wheeler, of the Worcester High School, delivered a lecture upon "The Teacher's Profession—its Inducements, and the Means of its Elevation." After the lecture, the current of remarks and addresses flowed freely. Every one seemed desirous of saying or doing something to increase the interest of the meeting. Messrs. Bradley, of Charlestown; Bowers, of Springfield; Sherwin, of Boston; Page of Albany, and Libbey, of Portland, were among those who addressed the meeting. Mr. J. Bates, of Boston, had that day returned from Rhode Island, and gave a cheering account of educational interests in that State. At a late hour, the Rev. Mr. Clarke, of Springfield, was called upon to close the session with prayer; after which all joined in singing Old Hundred.

The limits of this article do not admit of any extended criticisms on the lectures. It may with truth, however, be said of them all, that they were highly meritorious productions, both in respect to their literary finish and their practical usefulness. A mere analysis of them would do injustice both to the lecturers and their themes.

At no previous session of the Association has there been exhibited a more gratifying spirit of earnest enthusiasm, or of harmonious union. It is to be regretted that so few teachers from Suffolk County were present. The benefits resulting from a convention of this description, where men of similar tastes and similar pursuits are brought together for the free interchange of counsels and opinions, are of too important a nature to be lightly sacrificed.

The cordial reception extended to the Association by the people of Springfield, deserves especial notice. The use of Hampden Hall, a large and commodious room, was tendered free of expense. To the ladies, who attended from abroad, the citizens cheerfully offered their houses as homes, during their stay. Indeed, it cannot but be hoped, that a large number of teachers has been greatly benefited by this meeting, and that an excellent influence has been exerted upon the cause of Education throughout the State. — COMM.

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### PROSPECTUS.

At the late Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Teachers Association, the undersigned were appointed a committee to devise and carry into execution some plan for the publication of a Teachers Journal. In common with other Teachers of the State, they have felt a strong desire to see a periodical whose pages should be filled with the experience and views of practical Teachers, and whose appearance should tend to animate and stimulate all who are engaged in the arduous and important duties of teaching.

After considerable discussion and reflection, the undersigned have united on the following plan for the establishment and support of a Teachers Journal, for the ensuing year: —

1. A Journal shall be issued semi-monthly, and be called "THE MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER." Each number shall contain sixteen pages.

2. "The Massachusetts Teacher" shall be furnished to subscribers for \$1.00 per year, payable in advance; and if the receipts shall exceed the expenditures, said excess shall go into the treasury of the Massachusetts Teachers Association.

3. The several members of the undersigned committee shall, in rotation, take charge of a number, and be its nominal and responsible editor.

4. The general oversight of its publication shall be intrusted to an Executive Committee, consisting of four of the undersigned.

In pursuance of the above plan, we send forth the first number of the Journal; and we trust our undertaking may meet the approval of Teachers and the friends of Education generally. With their coöperation we hope to make it worthy of Massachusetts. We wish Teachers to regard it as *their* paper, and contribute freely to its columns. Wishing well to every other educational paper now in existence, we shall hope from each to borrow light, and shall be happy if we may impart some in return. It will be our only aim to advance the true interests of our profession, and labor heartily and harmoniously with all who are engaged in the great and good cause of Education.

Teachers, will you favor our object, and do what you can to sustain us in our undertaking? If so, we trust you will have no cause to regret any efforts you may put forth.

The publication of the second number may be delayed a few days, in order to ascertain, as nearly as possible, the number of copies that will be wanted. Will those who receive this number make an *immediate* effort to obtain subscribers in their respective neighborhoods, and forward the result as early as may be?

Exchanges, communications, &c., may be directed to the "Massachusetts Teacher," Boston, or Salem. Postage on all communications must be prepaid.

Subscriptions received at the bookstores of J. M. Whittemore, 114 Washington Street, Boston, and of W. S. B. Ives, Essex Street, Salem. Communications left at the same places will be duly received.

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